



OLR RESEARCH REPORT

April 4, 2013

2013-R-0207

QUESTIONS FOR THE DEPARTMENT ON AGING COMMISSIONER NOMINEE

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DEPARTMENT ON AGING (CGS § 17A-317)

- As of January 1, 2013, the Department on Aging is responsible for all functions, powers, and duties of the Department of Social Services' (DSS) Aging Services Division. This includes, among other things, administering federal Older Americans Act programs, elderly nutrition programs, health insurance counseling, and state grants for elderly services and programs.
- The commissioner is responsible for the overall operation and administration of the department; establishing and developing programs and administering services to achieve the department's purposes; advocating for necessary additional elderly programs; assisting and advising government agencies; planning elderly programs and services; coordinating public and private elderly outreach activities; and consulting and cooperating with area and private planning agencies.

QUESTIONS

1. Please describe the mission of the Aging Department as you see it. As commissioner, how will you ensure that the department meets this mission? What particular experience, expertise, and other assets do you bring to the Aging Department?
2. Do you believe that the department has the adequate resources, in terms of both personnel and budget, to meet its obligations under the law?
3. You served as the aging commissioner for the former Aging Department, which was abolished in 1993 and folded into DSS' Aging Services Division. Why is it appropriate and necessary to establish another independent aging department? Why is now the right time?
4. The Aging Department is primarily responsible for administering federal Older Americans Act programs and housing the state's Long-Term Care Ombudsman program. But, DSS will continue to administer the state's elderly Medicaid-related programs, including the Money Follows the Person demonstration program and the Connecticut Home Care Program For Elders. Do you anticipate any challenges with having the state's elderly programs administered by two different departments? How will you work with DSS to alleviate potential system fragmentation?
5. Other than funding issues, what do you consider to be the greatest challenges to increasing access to elderly programs and services?
6. Which elderly programs have been the most effective and why? What are your ideas for improving current programs or creating new ones?
7. There have been increasing efforts by states to "rebalance" their long-term care systems, in order to reduce the number of people in institutions and increase the number served by home- and community-based services. How much progress has Connecticut made in this regard? What strategies, initiatives, or programs would you like to see pursued to help the state with its rebalancing effort?

8. The legislature's Task Force to Study Aging in Place issued its final recommendations to help the state meet the needs of residents who wish to age in place. Do you have any thoughts, ideas, or comments about these recommendations?

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